

**REPORT BACK ON
L.D. 609
PROVIDED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF INLAND FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE
BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON INLAND
FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE**

DATE OF HEARING: January 12, 2016

L.D. TITLE: " An Act To Provide an Incentive to Nonresident Landowners Who Own More than 250 Acres To Keep That Land Open for Hunting"

SUBJECT: A report back to the Committee regarding incentives for landowners to keep their land open for hunting.

Good afternoon Senator Davis, Representative Duchesne and honorable members of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Committee. I am Tim Peabody, Deputy Commissioner at Inland Fisheries and Wildlife. I am here today to provide the Department's proposal for LD 609.

The bill proposed that the Department provide nonresident landowners with a minimum of 250 continuous acres with a reduced rate license if the land was kept open for hunting. The Department strongly supports landowners and their willingness to keep their land open for recreational access. The Department did oppose this particular initiative due to the complexities surrounding implementation. There are numerous ways to support landowners, however to find a proposal that most agree with and ultimately provides an incentive for landowners to allow public access for recreational use, is a challenge.

With the new composition of the "Landowners and Sportsmen Relations Advisory Board" which became law as part of P.L.c. 277 (L.D. 1321), we would like to offer that they take on the task of reviewing the many and varied ideas that could support resident and nonresident landowners who keep their land open for recreational use, specifically for hunting. They are meeting for the first time on January 22, 2016.

Listed below are two of the general duties assigned to this board within Title 12 Section 10157 that we feel make it appropriate for them to research and discuss the issue at hand:

- Propose changes to or advise the commissioner on landowner-related laws, rules, department policies and other significant landowner and land user issues; and
- Review landowner-related policies and procedures, conduct studies, evaluate programs and make recommendations to the commissioner.

Review of LD 609 is identified on their upcoming agenda and the Commissioner has asked that the Advisory Board present their ideas to the Department prior to the adjournment of the Legislative session. This will allow time for the Committee to review their proposals.